



Electronic Regulatory Filing System Frequently Asked Questions

Contents

General Information	2
Customers	4
Filing Documents	5
Viewing Documents	7
Software Requirements.....	7
Hardware Requirements	8
Costs	8
Legal issues	8
Confidential Documents	8

Specific filing requirements in contested cases apply to each case as ordered by the Administrative Law Judge. These requirements may be different than, and supersede, the FAQs presented here.



General Information

1. ***What file formats does the Electronic Regulatory Filing (ERF) system accept?***

The PSC requires that documents be filed in Adobe Acrobat PDF format. Documents should be converted to PDF directly from the native format (Word, Excel, Access, Arc View, TIF, etc.). Documents should not be scanned, as these files can be quite large and are not searchable.

The ERF system will also accept working spreadsheets in Excel format. For documents filed in Excel format, the user is not required to submit a redundant PDF version of the same content. However, if it is not a working spreadsheet (if all that is needed is the document image), then it should be filed in PDF format rather than Excel.

PSC Staff may request that documents be e-mailed in their native format to allow for easier sharing of text and formatting.

2. ***Are there document naming standards?***

The document name must be less than 256 characters long, but what the document is named entirely depends on internal standards the filer must comply with. It is recommended that customers develop meaningful internal naming standards (for example, require that the document name provide information about the nature of the document).

3. ***What means of filing are available for electronic documents?***

The Commission requires electronic documents be filed using the web-based ERF system available on the PSC's website. In rare instances the Commission may choose to accept filings by e-mail, diskette or CD.

4. ***Does the PSC need a paper copy of documents filed electronically?***

No. Please do not follow-up an electronic filing with a redundant paper copy of the same document(s). The electronically-filed document will be considered the official record.

5. ***For CPCN and Construction cases, is it still necessary to provide hard copies of documents for county clerks and libraries?***

Yes. This requirement has not changed. The same is true for maps.

6. ***Will the PSC reject paper filings?***

The PSC recognizes that the general public may not have the ability to generate electronic filings. Division staff will scan and upload letters from the public; however the public is encouraged to use the File a Comment web page to comment on cases.

A major focus of this system is to better serve customers of the PSC by quickly making documents available electronically online. Documents which are received in electronic format will be made available on the web much sooner than documents which are not.



7. *What will happen if deadlines are missed due to technical problems?*

Please contact the case coordinator on the docket or the PSC's Record's Management Unit (RMU), if it becomes apparent that technical problems will remain unresolved past the filing deadline.

8. *How are customers filing electronic documents notified that their filing has been received and accepted by the PSC?*

The ERF system provides an immediate confirmation screen upon successful upload of a document. When the document is reviewed, the system sends a confirmation message to the email address associated with the ERF account used to upload the document. This message notes whether the document has been accepted or rejected and record details for accessibility purposes.

Users may also check on the status of any document filed by checking the Document Activity Status link within their ERF system account.

9. *If a document is rejected, will the user receive a reason?*

Yes, the reason will be included in an automated e-mail after the upload is rejected. The PSC's RMU is required to provide a reason for the rejection.

10. *How are case numbers assigned to new application filings?*

RMU staff reviews the filings in the ERF queue and determines when a new application has been filed. The new filing is entered into the PSC's Case Management System (CMS) and the docket number and title are assigned at that time. RMU staff link the new docket number to the document(s) while in ERF queue and accepts it into the docket like any other case related upload.

11. *How soon are documents available on the PSC's CMS application after filing?*

Documents are available in CMS as soon as RMU staff review and accept them. Documents that are submitted late on a Friday may not be reviewed until Monday morning or later.

Please note that documents in ERF queue will be either accepted or rejected within two (2) business days unless the PSC and the filer are in communication regarding the filing, for example.

12. *Is there a customer assistance area for ERF or CMS?*

Yes, visit ERF Help page for other resources regarding ERF or contact the PSC by phone and e-mail for questions or problems during normal business hours.

Please contact RMU via email at PSCRecordsMail@wisconsin.gov or by phone at (608) 261-8524.

13. *Will e-mails relating to ERF have a consistent subject line so they can be subjected to rules?*

Yes. This will allow users to automatically archive or file system e-mails. Note, however, that e-mails sent for different purposes will have different subject lines and may have different senders.



(Continued...) Subscriptions will include the user's subscription name in the subject line. Document acceptance notifications will come from the PSCRecordMails@wisconsin.gov. Users may want to wait until they have received a few e-mails before creating rules for handling mail from this system. All e-mail from the PSC will be from internet domain wisconsin.gov.

Customers

14. *How does a small utility or company, or an individual customer get authorization to file electronic documents?*

Authorization is received when a customer creates an ERF user account.

From the logon screen, click on Create New Individual Account to establish a new individual user account. The system has been developed to allow for two classes of customers: individual and corporate. See below for more details on corporate accounts.

15. *What is a "corporate" account?*

Corporate accounts are a managerial tool for organizations. These accounts allow an organization (e.g., utility, law firm, intervenor) to identify and control accounts for users who are authorized to file on their behalf. Note that this is an optional service offered to corporate entities to allow them greater security in identifying authorized filers, but such entities are not required to use corporate accounts if individual accounts are satisfactory to them.

16. *What can a "corporate administration" account do?*

A corporate administration account is used to create and inactivate subaccounts that are authorized to file on behalf of the entity. The account can: enter subscriptions, search and view documents, check the status of all documents filed on behalf of the company and be notified whenever one of the subaccounts files a document in this system.

The corporate account is for managerial purposes only; therefore it cannot be used to file documents.

17. *Is there a limit to the number of individual accounts a company can authorize to submit files electronically?*

There is no system limit. The only limit is how many accounts the corporate entity wishes to manage at any given time.

18. *Are law firms able to file on behalf of utilities?*

Yes. Employees of law firms can set up individual accounts like anyone else. The law firm may wish to set up a corporate account for their own firm, or the utility may set up a corporate account authorize the individual ERF user account of an employee of another firm to file on their behalf. Since an employee of a law firm may conduct business on behalf of many utilities, it is recommended that the law firm set up and manage the corporate accounts for their own employees rather than the utility.



19. *Is there a test docket available?*

16255-TI-100 may be used to submit test documents.

20. *What about Annual Reports?*

Annual Reports should be filed in the ERF system through the PSC's E-Services Portal.

21. *What about Interconnection Agreements?*

Interconnection Agreements should be filed in the ERF system. For Voluntary Interconnection Agreement file through the PSC's E-Service Portal.

22. *What about Intermediate Filings (motions/pleadings in ALJ-handled cases)?*

All cases are part of the electronic filing system and all supporting documentation should be filed electronically.

23. *What about PSC Staff documents?*

The Commission issues all official documents in its dockets by filing on the ERF System.

Filing Documents

24. *What is the maximum document size allowed?*

Currently, the system limits uploads to 20 MB per file with the capability to upload ten files per batch. It is recommended that extremely large documents be separated into chapters and filed as separate documents, so that the record remains accessible to those with slower connections.

25. *How are exhibits handled in the process, particularly if they are not submitted in electronic form?*

All pre-filed exhibits should be filed in electronic form. For on-site hearings, exhibits that have not been pre-filed should be electronically filed at the PSC during the proceeding.

For off-site hearings, exhibits that have not been pre-filed should be submitted in electronic form within 5 days of the hearing. Those exhibits that cannot easily be reduced to electronic form will be allowed to be presented upon consent of the Administrative Law Judge. The PSC provides facilities in its hearing room for filing and viewing electronic documents while hearings are in progress at the PSC.

26. *What happens when multiple documents are included in a filing?*

Where appropriate and keeping in mind the maximum document size, users should group documents into logical units and combine those documents into a single filing. For example, a Brief with a cover letter and several attachments may all be combined into a single document. A confidential document and its corresponding Affidavit should be combined into a single document. A general guideline here is, if the pages would have been stapled together in filing a paper document, likewise combine them electronically into a single document.



(Continued...) Note: Testimony and Exhibits still have to be separated out by individual and filed separately. If you are separating a filing into several pieces, please include that fact in the description as well (“Attachment B to the XYZ Document” or “XYZ Document Part 1 of 4”).

27. *Will transcripts be included in the system and available online?*

Transcripts for all formal cases are available in electronic form in the system.

28. *Will the PSC continue to mail Orders and Notices?*

Parties involved in the case will provide their email address to PSC Staff to receive these documents electronically and as soon as they are published.

Note: Orders and Notices are available online through searches in either the ERF system or the CMS, and anyone with access to the internet can receive all case-related filings by email through an ERF subscription.

29. *When uploading documents: is this compatible with document management systems that may be in place on the users’ systems?*

Generally yes, provided that the document management system allows users to browse to the document. If the document management system is web-based, it may not be compatible with the ERF system.

30. *Do users have to generate read-only PDF files before uploading?*

No. Generating a document as read-only will prevent the PSC from stamping it with a received date and time. All documents become read-only once it is loaded into the system.

31. *Will there be a recall process to get a document back if the wrong one is uploaded?*

If the user contacts RMU before the document is accepted, it can be rejected. Once the document is accepted, PSC policy considers it an official record.

If the document contains confidential information, RMU shall change the document type to “Unacceptable Filing” and it will be removed from view.

32. *Do I have to refile if the docket ID was entered incorrectly?*

No. If the incorrect docket ID was entered during the upload process RMU can move the document to the correct docket ID. Please send a written request to PSCRecordsMail@wisconsin.gov, including the PSC Reference number and the specific edit(s).

All of the following document details can be edited by RMU staff;

- docket ID
- document type
- industry/service type on a non-docket filing
- document descriptions



Viewing Documents

33. *How are documents accessed by PSC customers?*

The preferred means of accessing documents is by internet browser through the PSC website, either through a direct search or by subscription.

34. *What kinds of search capabilities are available to find documents?*

Customers are able to enter a variety of search criteria from the E-Services Portal to find the documents they need. For example, one can search on utility number or name, formal case number, case type, document type, or specified keywords.

35. *Is there an option to view all documents filed since the last time I looked?*

No, not explicitly. Several search options may be used to display recently filed documents.

36. *How do subscriptions work?*

Customers and ERF users are able to set up a variety of possible searches, based on utility, industry type, document type, case type, or full case number. On a periodic basis, the system searches the database for any new documents that match the specified criteria. When matching documents are found, an e-mail is generated to the subscribing customer with links to each matching document.

37. *Do corporate accounts have the same subscription capabilities as individual accounts?*

Yes. The two account types are the same from a subscription standpoint.

38. *Can corporate accounts see each other's subscriptions?*

No. However, when a subscriber receives an e-mail notification that new documents have been entered that match subscription criteria, that e-mail can be shared at will.

Software Requirements

39. *Is special software required for generating electronic documents?*

Adobe Acrobat is the industry standard for creating PDF files, however there are other PDF writers available, including freeware and shareware versions.

40. *Is special software required to view electronic documents on the PSC website?*

PDF documents can be viewed with a free download of Adobe Acrobat Reader. You will also need an internet connection and a current browser (New Microsoft Edge or Firefox is recommended).

41. *How do I view the PDF attachments in the Microsoft Edge browser?*

The PDF in ERF will need to be downloaded/saved and opened outside of the browser to view the attachments.



Hardware Requirements

42. Is special hardware required for using the ERF System?

Hardware that supports the required software and is adequate for uploading and downloading from the internet is necessary. A fast internet connection is recommended, as many documents will be very slow to upload or access using a 56K or slower modem.

Screen resolution is recommended to be set at a minimum of 800 x 600. The system will still work at even lower resolutions; however, the screen design is optimized for a resolution of 1024 x 768.

Costs

43. How much will it cost a utility to file electronically?

The PSC does not charge for electronic filing. The only additional cost may be for software or hardware needed to generate and file the documents.

44. Is there a cost to view documents online?

Documents are available to all customers online freely. If interested customers do not have a computer with internet access, free access is provided at most public libraries.

Legal issues

45. Is the electronic version the official filed copy, or is a redundant paper copy required too?

The electronic version will be the official copy of a filing. Generally, the filing of paper documents is intentionally discouraged except where absolutely necessary. If a paper copy is required, filers will be notified.

46. Must electronically filed documents contain a signature?

The Commission prefers that documents which require a signature be filed using the "/s/" signature designation. For example, a document signed by Jane Doe would appear as "/s/Jane Doe." Users should avoid scanned images of the original signatures and electronic signatures.

47. What will be considered the time of service on the PSC?

This will be the time/date stamp on the file when it is received in the ERF system.

Confidential Documents

48. How does the PSC safeguard confidential documents filed electronically?

The ERF System provides the Upload Confidential Document web page to file the contents of which the filer claims includes information that meets the Commission's standards for confidentially handling treatment. (Continued on next page...)



Data entered via this application is encrypted at the time of upload and protected using Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) technology.

Upon receipt of a PDF document filed confidentially, the ERF System automatically stamps, at the top center of each page, the word "CONFIDENTIAL" in red Courier Standard 24pt font.

49. Does the customer still have to file a public copy of a confidential document?

Yes, the Upload Confidential Document web page requires the concurrent filing of a redacted public version of any unreacted document filed under a request for confidentiality handling treatment. The public version should redact only the portions of the document that the filer believes meets the standards for confidentiality it is claiming. The public version should contain the same number of pages as the unreacted version.

50. Will this system eliminate the need for the affidavits that come along with confidential documents?

No. There are two options available for verifying a claim for confidential handling treatment: 1) the filer may either attach an affidavit to the beginning of the confidential document, or 2) complete the Confidentiality Request web form in the presence of a notary, who completes the "AFFIANT AND NOTARY OFFICER" section of the form.

51. How will confidential documents be treated in searches and subscriptions?

Where search or subscription criteria match a confidential document, the document description will be displayed with a lock icon identifying the document as confidential. There will be no link to open up the actual document.